



**77 West Main Street
Hopkinton, MA 01748
(508) 435-5506 fax (508)435-8348**

YOU AND YOUR NEWBORN

You and your infant are ready to embark on a lifelong adventure. There will be moments of happiness, sorrow, pride, anger, elation and despair—all of these will contribute to the growth of your relationship as a parent and child. All new parents have some of these feelings, and you will find that they will constantly change as you gain new experiences. You have the privilege and responsibility of bringing a new life into this world, and providing an environment in which both parent and child will thrive and develop. We share your joy and enthusiasm and look forward to many years of providing care and support to you and your new family.

Well Baby Visits

As Board Certified pediatricians and Fellows of the American Academy of Pediatrics, we subscribe to their recommended schedule of health maintenance visits: within 72 hours of discharge from the hospital, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months and 24 months. At each of these visits, there will be time to:

- Discuss any problems that may have arisen in the intervening period
- Thoroughly examine your child
- Spend the remaining time preparing you for what lies ahead developmentally and physically.

Your infant will be weighed, measured and have head circumference determined. Immunizations which will protect your child against many pediatric illnesses will be given at many of these visits. These immunizations are safe, effective and an integral part of your child's health care maintenance. Information describing each of these immunizations will be given to you prior to or at the time of your visits. We will be most happy to discuss any questions you may have regarding these immunizations at the time of your child's visit.

In order to help the nurse perform her duties accurately and in an unhurried manner, and also to allow us to use the time allotted to your child effectively, we ask you to arrive 10 minutes before your scheduled time.

Feeding

Feeding is one of your baby's first pleasurable experiences. The satisfaction of hunger is one of the driving forces in the baby's first months of life. Feeding allows the parent a special time during which you can bond and express your love for your child.

Try to find an area of the house that is comfortable and quiet and free of distractions. Feeding a child should be calm and relaxed part of your day. If things are not going well, please contact us so that we may offer you some helpful hints.

The type of nutrition (breast milk or iron-fortified formula) should be chosen based on the individual needs of the parent and child. And while bonding, nurturing and growth are similar for both types of nutrition, we do recommend and encourage breast-feeding for new babies.

Breast-feeding does take some adjustment. Mothers need extra rest time, extra fluids, and increased amounts of nutritious foods. Breast-feeding is not always easy or automatic, and mothers need the emotional support of those around them. We do have a lactation consultants on staff in the office who is available to help and to provide consultations if needed. Additionally, La Leche League, an organization of breast-feeding mothers, has an active local group. If you are not sure about the choice of nutrition we are available to discuss the merits of both forms with you. Likewise, if you have a strong family history of food allergies or if you have had other children with formula or breast milk intolerance, please let us know so that we may offer our advice to you.

Vomiting, Diarrhea and Constipation

Many infants will have episodes of spitting small amounts of breast milk or formula during or after feeds. These episodes are not harmful and as long as your baby is gaining weight well, they should not concern you. However, forceful vomiting or significant spitting after feed associated with color change or severe crying may indicate a problem with your infant's gastro-intestinal tract or a severe intolerance to either formula or breast milk. If your infant is having such a problem, you should call the office so that an appointment can be set up to evaluate your child.

Loose stools up to 5-6 times per day can be a common occurrence in normal infants. As long as the color (yellow-mustard) is normal and the stools appear seedy with some water, there is no need for worry. Diarrhea in the infant is usually frequent, explosive, foul-smelling, greenish and occasionally associated with blood or mucus. Should this occur in your infant, please call the office for advice and/or an appointment.

Signs of Illness

Determining when your child is ill can be a difficult task for any new parent. We always want things to go well and smoothly with our children and when a child seems to be "out

of synch,” it can be a very unsettling experience for any parent. Following is a list of signs or symptoms that should prompt a call to the office for advice or an appointment:

- ❑ **Poor Feedings:** If your child suddenly loses interest in eating or has difficulty with his feeding or vomits repetitively.
- ❑ **Increased Sleepiness:** If your child becomes more sleepy than usual and is sleeping through feeds or if your child seems to have difficulty arousing from a nap or sleep.
- ❑ **Increased Irritability:** If your child becomes much more irritable than usual and if he/she can not be calmed down by your usual methods.
- ❑ **Poor Color:** If your child becomes excessively pale or if the skin becomes mottled or marbled looking and does not improve when the child is warmed. (N.B. most infants will shut down their circulation to their hands and feet when they are cold and their extremities can look purple. This should reverse itself when the infant is warmed.)
- ❑ **Fever:** Infants’ temperatures are subject to the environment they are in. If the infant is overdressed or in a warm room, their temperature will rise. If the temperature in the room is too cool or if the infant is underdressed, the infant can become chilled. Any rectal temperature greater than 100.5 degrees that does not come down by undressing the infant should be reported to the office.

Finally, if at any time, day or night, weekday or weekend, you feel that there is something wrong with your infant, you should call the office immediately.

Diaper Rashes and Skin Care

Most rashes in the diaper area are caused by too harsh a diaper wipe or a temporary irritation caused by an acidic stool or ammonia in the urine. These rashes should respond to cessation of diaper wipes and the use of plain warm water for cleaning, followed by the application of an occlusive diaper cream (Balmex, Desitin or Zinc Oxide ointment). Occasionally taking the diaper off during naps and airing things out can be helpful.

Recurrent rashes in the diaper area or rashes following oral antibiotic therapy can sometimes indicate a yeast infection and these rashes require a specific cream to be cured. Please call the office if you feel you require a prescription.

We are frequently inundated by advertising suggesting we should use “baby this” or “baby that” soap, shampoo or lotion. The reality is that most babies can be cared for using regularly available soaps and creams. We recommend a gentle soap like Dove, Basis or Purpose for cleansing and Aquaphor or Eucerin for moisturizing skin. Shampooing with a non-stinging product once a week is usually sufficient. Bathing is not required on a daily basis and frequently a sponging is all that is necessary.

Traveling and Visiting With Your Infant

Before your infant is born, you should select an infant car seat that will be safe and comfortable for your child. If you have not obtained a car seat, the hospital has a program to provide one for you. If you are not sure which car seat to purchase, feel free to ask us for advice.

Relatives and friends will want to see you and your new child almost immediately. Although you may not want to hurt anyone's feelings, it is extremely important that both you and your baby have enough time to rest. For the first month of life, it is advisable to limit visits to the immediate family and close friends. Visits should be short so as not to tire you or the baby. If someone has a cold or cough or fever, he/she should not handle the infant. Try to keep visits by other small children to a minimum as they are the people to bring viruses in to your home. We do not recommend visits to shopping centers or supermarkets until your child has his/her first series of immunizations.